

Effect of Music Therapy on Mood in Acute and Community Hospital Settings in Singapore

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1. Ms. Michelle Low is an American Board-Certified Music Therapist. She did her internship at the Good Samaritan Society – Speciality Care Community in Robbinsdale, Minnesota, USA, before joining the Singapore General Hospital. She is currently the secretary of the Association for Music Therapy, Singapore.

2. Ms. Wang Feng Ng is an American Board-Certified Music Therapist. She has worked with various client populations in Singapore and in the United States, prior to joining the St. Andrew's Community Hospital in 2013. She is also the founding President of the Association for Music Therapy, Singapore.

Keywords: Music Therapy, Mood, Hospital, Acute, Community, Singapore

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Paper Description (300-500 words):

Mood has been shown to interact with physical functioning and can affect rates of recovery in poststroke patients (Chen, Leys & Esquenazi, 2013). Depression and depressive symptoms were negatively associated with functional outcome (Herrmann, Black, Lawrence, Szekeley & Szalai, 1998; Kutlubaev & Hackett, 2014). According to a meta-analysis of published observational studies (2005 till 2013), there has not been a significant reduction in the proportion of people experiencing depression after stroke, despite the reporting of effective and validated treatment and prevention strategies (Hackett & Pickles, 2014). Low doses of anti-depressants did not improve mood or functioning (Chan, Ng & Straughan, 1995). The great need for evidence-based strategies to treat depression remains (Hackett & Pickles, 2014). In addition, there is emerging local evidence of depressive symptoms being dynamic over time, in not only stroke survivors, but also their family caregivers (Malhotra et al., 2015).

The impact of music on mood has consistently been a focus and area of interest in music therapy (Nayak, Wheeler, Shiflett, & Agostinelli, 2000). Since the ancient Greeks, music has long been thought to influence emotions (Garrido & Davidson, 2013). Moreover, latest research paired with neuroimaging has demonstrated the effectiveness of music therapy on mood within many areas such as physical, communicative, and emotional rehabilitation (Heiderscheit & Madson, 2015). In a hospital setting, mood can interfere with an individual's reentry into the community and ability to obtain maximum benefit from rehabilitation (Heiderscheit & Madson, 2015). Therefore, the significance of music therapy is to provide a comfortable, non-threatening milieu to provide patients with coping skills, thereby stimulating motivation to speed up the recuperation process. That being said, studies have shown that an increase in positive mood leads to increased compliancy, shortened recovery period, as well as a decrease in caregiver stress (Kim et al., 2011). There is a lack of local evidence of the effect on mood as a result of music therapy.

Descriptive analysis of the data collected from two hospitals (one acute, one community) in Singapore will be presented. Mood data, using the Mood Faces Scale (Andrews & Withey, 1976), will be collected till end of April 2016, from adult stroke survivors, who participated in music therapy sessions.

Limitations faced included irregular attendance due to patients' medical conditions and abrupt discharges from the hospital. On top of this, there is a lack of data on participation levels after mood elevation. (394 words)

Abstract (50 words)

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of music therapy on mood of stroke survivors in acute and community hospital settings in Singapore.

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